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“THE INFANCY OF THE UNION.”

Read



Peter Force Esq
from his friend
"THE INFANCY OF THE UNION."
11-13.12.

A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

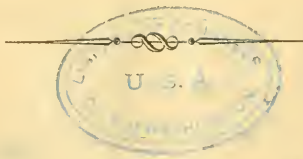
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and read
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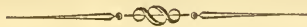
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A DISCOURSE

ON

“THE INFANCY OF THE UNION.”



WHEN ancient Corinth fell before the arms of victorious Rome, the legend tells us, that out of the various metals which were melted together in the conflagration of the city, there was created ONE, more precious than any of its elements; more enduring in its strength; more beautiful in its brightness. This classical tradition illustrates, as well the process as the result, when a Revolution blended together the varied communities of colonial North America.

Whenever the philosophical history of our country shall be written, its most interesting portion will be that which records the growth and progress of the social union. The Federal Union, as a frame of government, has been often and ably discussed, and its foundations, whether in the Declaration of Independence, the Arti-

cles of Confederation, or the Constitution itself, have been carefully scrutinized; and by no one more so, than by that venerable man, who, during the past year, with the alacrity of youth, obeyed your summons on a memorable anniversary, and with the full vigour of a mind on which age has cast no shadow, discharged the duty which your summons imposed.* But there is an union beyond and above all frames of government. There are foundations deeper than any that have yet been laid bare. Assuming the corner-stone of the Union, as a national political institution, to be the Declaration of Independence, and no one has, I believe, dug deeper, and that on the Fourth of July, seventeen hundred and seventy-six, our forefathers laid that stone in its chamber of enduring repose, what I seek to call your attention to, is the union of sentiment which brought the builders together, with the spade, the mattock, and the pick, not to build, from brick and slime, a leaning tower, "whose top might reach unto heaven," but to lay the eternal masonry of freedom's citadel, hewn from the bosom of our native hills, to be bound together by the enduring cement of indissoluble affection.

Curious, indeed, would be the inquiry, as to the precise period when the North American Colonies began to look upon each other as friends and brethren. As

* Ex President Adams. (See Appendix, A.)

originally planted, they had no principle of union. They were not one in origin, in language, in religion, or in interest. None could suppose *then* that they were one in destiny. The infant settlements on the coast hardly ventured to conjecture what lands, or what people lay behind the headlands which put out into the ocean, and when they did peep beyond, they often saw strange and hostile faces, and heard the sound of other tongues than the one they spoke.— Even where there was a common origin, there was no sympathy; and the Swede, and the Dutchman, were better friends far, than the Cavaliers and Independents who came from Old England, who seemed to know no dearer use for a common tongue than to revile each other conveniently, and claimed a common birth-place, as giving them the privilege to hate each other more virulently.

How this separate existence was modified, and the perfect union of sentiment produced, anterior to any political union and aside from all political combinations, is, then, an inquiry full of curious interest.

There were causes of different kinds at work, commencing at an early period, and accumulating and strengthening till the work was done. The ultimate and immediate inducement to political union was, of course, community of social right and common suffering under oppression; but there were others of equal efficacy, operating secretly and indirectly. It was a

remark of the elder Adams, that "the Revolution was twenty years old when the war began," and it is no less true, that the Union was fifty years old when it was first declared to exist.

There were some inducements to union which require no illustration, connected mainly with the geographical relations of the Colonies. Looking at the face of the country, and bearing in mind that for a long time the settlements were merely on the coast, and in depth did not extend to the first mountain range which runs lengthwise through the Continent, it is obvious that from Georgia to New Hampshire, there was no physical barrier to divide the colonists from each other. There was no arm of the ocean interposed to prevent free intercourse—no bay, or river that could not be easily crossed. There were neither Pyrenees nor Alps; but the primitive mail-carrier of those days, at an early period, so soon, at least, as the path was cut through the forest, and the thicket cleared of the Indian, carried his little budget slowly but securely from one end of British North America to the other. Each great river, the Delaware, the Susquehanna, the Hudson, and the Connecticut, had its source beyond the charter limits of the colony on whose shores it reached the ocean, and the riparian privilege which nature gives, of free navigation, in and out, unquestioned at that time, made distant settlers on the same waters, feel like neighbours.

It is not easy to ascertain when the first road was made along the sea-board. In sixteen hundred and seventy-seven, before the settlement of Philadelphia, William Edmundson, a public Friend, traveled southward, from New York to the Delaware, in company with a Swede and an Indian guide. In attempting to cross from Middletown Point, they lost their way, and were obliged to go back, so as to find the Raritan at any point and to follow its margin, till they came to a small landing from New York, and thence by a path to the Falls of the Delaware. "By this means, only," says he, "did we find our way, and we saw no tame animals on the route." In sixteen hundred and ninety-eight, one of William Penn's companions, in speaking of the infant prosperity of the Quaker settlement, attributes it to "its vast and extended traffique and commerce (the gorgeous merchant of the present day will smile at the phrase) by sea and land," and then proceeds to enumerate the distant points whither this vast traffic extends—not Calcutta, Canton, or Batavia—not Lima, Mazatlan, or Astoria: but St. Christopher's, Bermuda, Montserrat, Barbadoes, Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New England, and New York. Could this poor, humble-minded, primitive quaker, who thought he saw then a vast and extended commerce, open his eyes and ears now, and see what we all see, unmoved, every moment of our lives; could he see American

commerce disturbed by the opium-eaters of the celestial Empire, and hear of teas and silks, bought in Canton and paid for by bills of exchange, drawn in Philadelphia or New York on London, his agony of surprise would not be less than yours, could you see your posterity, after the lapse of the same number of years, standing amidst the ruins of abandoned railroads and disregarded steamboats, having miraculously retrograded to an age of barter.

But the testimony of a far greater man than either of these obscure travellers, to the condition of the colonies at that period, has been preserved. In the latter part of sixteen hundred and seventy-one, George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, and one of those great agitators of the sluggish spirit, to whom the Reformation gave full scope, after being scourged and imprisoned, year after year, in Great Britain, landed in America. His mission was pastoral in its character, and had for its object, the encouragement of the Quaker settlements, then thinly scattered over this wilderness. The Journal of his American pilgrimage, as you are aware, is still extant, and tells in language of extreme simplicity and beauty its tale of privation and patient endurance; a tale strongly illustrative of the real character of the obstacles to social union, which the early settlers encountered and overcome. He landed near the mouth of the Patuxent river, on the western shore of Maryland, and traveled as far eastward as Rhode

Island, and as far south as Carolina. After crossing the Chesapeake, his route, northward, was by the eastern shore to New Castle. "The next day," says he,* "we began our journey to New England, and a tedious journey it was, through the woods and the wilderness, over bogs and across great rivers. We got over the Delaware, not without some danger of our lives, and then had that wilderness country to pass through, since called West Jersey, not inhabited by any English, so that we traveled a whole day together, without seeing man or woman, house or dwelling-place. Sometimes we lay in the woods, by a fire, and sometimes in Indian wigwams." Thus travelling, pausing at occasional settlements, this illustrious Pilgrim, for such the religious sway he exercised entitles him to be considered, traversed Long Island, and reached his journey's end, in the Providence plantations. "Here," says he, using the peculiar language of an enthusiastic age, "we had a large meeting, at which, beside Friends, were some hundreds of people, as was supposed. A blessed, heavenly meeting this was—a powerful, thundering testimony for truth was borne therein—a great sense there was upon the people, and much brokenness and tenderness amongst them." "When," he adds, "this great meeting was over, it was somewhat hard for friends to part, for the glorious power of the Lord

* Fox's Journal. Folio Edition, 1775, p. 441.

which was over all, and his blessed truth, had knit and united them altogether—at last, filled with his power, and rejoicing in his truth, they went away, with joyful hearts, to their homes, in the several colonies where they lived.”

And here, let me pause one moment, and ask you, anticipating conclusions to be reached hereafter, to trace an active germ of union in the record of this early missionary.—George Fox soon after returned to England, again to feel the scourge of persecution, and again to abide in the prison-house; but he left behind him “joyful hearts in the *several* colonies,”—hearts which beat in unison on the one great topic of what they believed to be religious truth, and were bound together in communion which local or political separation could not sever. In every colony that he visited, the apostle of Quakerism found, or left a congregation, and thus connected by a spiritual chain of union, every humble community from New England to Georgia. Nor must it be forgotten, at what an early day other sects were weaving the web of religious communion over the wilderness. While the Jesuit missionary was planning, and executing his scheme of conversion in one quarter, and at a later day, the accomplished Berkeley, saw in his bright and poetic visions, the rise of new Christian empires here, the unsandalled feet of two humble, but not less ambitious missionaries of truth, Fox and Wesley, were traversing, at long inter-

vals, portions of this continent, and their footsteps can now be traced as plainly as when they were first imprinted on the virgin soil. The influence of Christian communion, in its varied forms, in aiding the growth of the social union, is, of itself, a subject of vast interest, to which I regret I can but refer in passing.

Such was the condition of Colonial America in sixteen hundred and seventy-one, when George Fox left it. There was no visible union then.

The history of intercommunication, accurately written, would throw great light on the growth of that sentiment of union, which, when political causes lent their agency, matured so gloriously. On an occasion like this, it can but be alluded to. I have spoken of the primitive mail-carrier of Colonial America. The creation of this convenient functionary was long postponed, and his progress was necessarily very slow. In sixteen hundred and ninety-two, a Post Office system was projected, if I mistake not, in Virginia, but almost immediately abandoned, in consequence of the difficulties of travelling.

In seventeen hundred, there was a local Post Office in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and in seventeen hundred and ten, an act of Parliament was passed, one of the few acts of beneficence for which Colonial America ever had to thank the mother country, and which is an important statute, as being one applying to all

America, and designed for the common benefit.*— Under this statute, the chief Letter Office was established in New York, the line of mails extending as far south as Charleston, the chief town of South Carolina, and as far eastward as Portsmouth, the chief town of New Hampshire. The revenue, from colonial postages, was appropriated for the general purposes of the Empire, and to defray the expenses of the pending war; and a strong prohibitory section is embodied in the statute, to meet an evil then, and since the fruitful source of partisan complaint, (whether justly or unjustly I do not venture here to say,) inflicting heavy penalties, and “permanent official disfranchisement on any Postmaster General, or his deputies, or any person employed under him or them, who should, by word, message, or writing, or in any other manner whatsoever, interfere in any election in the mother country or the colonies.”

It required, however, more than an act of Parliament, to bring into convenient action, mail communication between the distant parts of the Colonial settlements, and it was not, so far as I can now ascertain, till twelve or fifteen years later, that a continuous mail-route was organized even on the sea board. In seventeen hundred and twenty-two, a Philadelphia Newspaper expresses considerable alarm at the delay of the

* Stat. 9 Ann. chap. 10. For some interesting memorials, &c., relating to the early Post Office, see Vol. 7, Mass. Hist. Collections, 43.

New York Post, "which," it says, with a note of admiration as emphatic as any ever used in our day, when the Great Western delays her arrival twenty-four hours, "is three days beyond its time!"

It is not easy, in these days of secondary causes, when, in the heat and hurry from which few can claim exemption, no one pretends to trace a result of any kind beyond the immediate and palpable agency which produces it, to realize the vast effects produced by this one imperial agent, the Colonial Post Office. No matter how dilatory its processes may have been; no matter how many days and nights the loitering letter-bag may have wasted or required on its weary way; still, when it came, it brought distant points together in a right line and over land, which before were foreign to each other; and when it did not come, there was a feeling of disappointment at the want of news from their neighbours—a word till then unknown in the colonial vocabulary. The New Yorker no longer looked altogether out to sea, but began to feel an interest in the ferry-craft that brought from Staten Island the ten or twenty pound mail-bag, freighted with few, but important letters from Philadelphia, and Annapolis, and Williamsburg, and Charleston. The Postman, though not then "the herald of a *noisy* world" was a person of great importance, and a political and social agent, with influence far beyond the short calculation

of the day. It was the sound of the axe in the trackless forest—or the blazed tree to the craving eye of the man who thinks himself alone—it proved there was a neighbourhood, in what seemed to be a wilderness, and that there were those, not far off, who had sympathies, direct and immediate, which were needed and appreciated.

One immediate effect of the Post Office, in America, was the invigoration of the Newspaper press. The infancy of the newspaper art, in America, was sickly and precarious. It may, however, easily be conceived, how great must have been the impulse given to it by the institution of a Post Office in the colonies. The first Postmasters were the Editors. The Press told its tale of local grievance, or exemption, or danger. The mail was the telegraph which transmitted it to those who complained, or exulted, or feared, in sympathy—and, by this means, an union of sentiment was formed, long before the parties to it, or the world, dreamed of its existence. It was, to be sure, a loose and uncertain bond—a bond of accidental feeling, which might be easily interrupted, and the fragments made repulsive to each other. Nor, in asserting its precarious existence, must I be understood to exaggerate its obligation, or to intimate that there was, in fact or in visible promise, any thing like political union in it. All that is meant is, that in communities so closely contiguous,

and which, in addition, were made, by artificial means, to know of each other's existence, and take an interest in each other's welfare, there can be discerned at least the seed of the union beginning to germinate. Other influences of more apparent efficacy, soon began to operate.

And before I notice any of these, let me say, in advance, that there has always seemed to me an error in supposing that the colonies surmounted any very great difficulties in forming their political union. The antipathies and repugnance which, unquestionably, existed at the time of the first settlements, softened down much earlier than is usually supposed. As early as seventeen hundred, they may have been, in a measure, strangers, but they certainly were not enemies to each other; and in seventeen hundred and twenty-three, when Benjamin Franklin, the runaway apprentice, traveled from Boston to Philadelphia, it is obvious that his journey was through friendly regions, and that the border-lines of Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, which he successively crossed, marked no very palpable distinction of character or feeling, but were little else than the conventional lines which they now are. The individual who now addresses you has, not very many years since, experienced far more trouble from adverse local regulations in a neighbouring Federal Union, whose Constitution was a literal transcript of our own, than did Franklin, more than one

hundred years ago, when he worked his way from New England to Philadelphia.*

Nor was it the least of the delusions under which the agents of the Metropolitan Government laboured, that they never, in the lapse of time, were sensible of the growth of any common sentiment, but from first to last, asseverated earnestly, and no doubt sincerely, that concerted action was, and ever would be, impracticable. In seventeen hundred and twenty-eight, an official communication, on this very subject, was made to the government, in these emphatic terms:—

“From the universal loyalty of the people, even beyond any other parts of His Majesty’s dominions, it is absurd to imagine they have any thoughts of independence; and to show the reverse, it is the custom of all persons coming from thence for London, though they and their fathers and grandfathers, were born in New England, to say, and always deem it, coming *home*, as naturally as if born in London; so that it may be said, without being ludicrous, that it would not be

* In Bishop Berkeley’s Proposal for the Institution of a College for the education of Clergymen in Bermuda, published in seventeen hundred and twenty-five, two years after Franklin’s journey, is the following passage.—“A general intercourse and correspondence among the colonies is hardly to be found. For on the Continent, where there are neither inns, nor carriages, nor bridges over the rivers, there is no travelling by land between distant places. The English settlements are reputed to extend along the sea-coast for fifteen hundred miles. It is, therefore, plain, there can be no convenient communication between them, otherwise than by sea—no advantage, therefore, in this point, can be gained by settling on the continent.”

more absurd to place two of His Majesty's beef eaters to watch a child in the cradle, that it do not rise and cut its father's throat, than to guard these infant colonies to prevent their shaking off the British *yoke*.^{*} Besides, they are so distinct from one another in their forms of government, in their religious rites, in their emulation of trade, and consequently, in their affections, that they never can unite in so dangerous an enterprise."

"Never," says the adage, "is a long time;" and this promise of permanent loyalty, this assurance of helpless imbecility, was broken before it was fairly written. There was an union, or what is the same thing, an adaptation for union, though not then discernible to those who would not see. Significance was given to a current phrase of colonial conversation to which it really had no claim, and calling England "home," was most absurdly supposed to imply an attachment to her soil, so exclusive, as to shut out all sympathy with their neighbours on this side of the water who called England "home" too. The cradled infant was a neglected child, which had soon to help itself, scramble about without assistance, and, as we shall presently see, like the infant of mythology, defend itself against enemies from whom its natural guardian should have protected it.

^{*} Hutchinson, vol. ii. §19.

Social causes of union, of more palpable efficacy, soon began to develope themselves. As the colonial settlements strengthened and deepened, they began to feel an outward pressure, equal on every point, and producing a sense of danger in every part. This was the pressure of Indian warfare. It would be foreign to the purpose of this discourse to say a word as to the merit of the colonial treatment of the Aborigines of this continent. Be it what it may, the decree had gone forth from higher than human authority that the savage man and the savage brute were to yield up the wilderness to civilization; and they did yield it up, and with equal reluctance: and for more than a century, the colonist was an armed man, armed for the protection of his primitive fireside and his desolate family, and every year the frontier line of civilization became more extended.

The Indian wars, beside producing the mere social effect of community of interest, soon led to political combinations, more or less extensive and more or less intimate. So long as the Indians remained in force on the east bank of the Hudson river, New England combined to protect itself, and we see accordingly, the rude but effective "*confederacy*" (the word then first had its application in America) of sixteen hundred and forty-three. The formation of this confederacy, as a measure of incipient political sovereignty, and a step towards independence, has been often noticed. As an

act of union, it is far more significant, or rather, it is mainly as a measure of union that it had any very decided tendency to independence. Had it been merely a temporary contribution of military quotas for the common defence at a season of peculiar danger, it could not be regarded as affording any very decided illustration of the seminal principle of American union, and, in its form and structure, would have borne no other character than that of the accidental necessity which created it; but if any one will have reference to its elaborate arrangement, he will see the basis of future political combinations distinctly marked. Its terms dwell with emphasis on doctrinal unanimity in religious matters, as a main inducement to political concord, and refer to the contest then waging in the mother country, "by means of which," says the preamble, "we are hindered, both from the humble way of seeking advice, and reaping those comfortable fruits of protection which at other times we might well expect." "We therefore," it continues, "do consider it our bounden duty, without delay, to enter into a present consociation amongst ourselves for mutual strength and help, in all future concernments, that as in nation and relation, so in other respects, we be and continue *one*, according to the tenor and true meaning of the ensuing articles—by the name and title of 'the *United* Colonies of New England,' to be bound in a firm and *perpetual* league of friendship and amity, for offence and defence, mutual

advice and succour on all just occasions, both for preserving and propagating the truths and liberties of the Gospel, and for our own mutual safety and welfare.”

The history of this confederacy is of less interest in the connexion in which I wish to consider it than its institution. It was the creature of necessity, but it started into being, complete and perfect. Its heart's blood was religious sympathy. The spirit which animated it was of that spirit which was working great results and great catastrophes in the parent country. Sixteen hundred and forty-three, was an era when principles of self-government were in active fermentation, when the blast which had been driven into the ancient stone-work of Monarchy, had been fired, and the old walls were shaking fearfully. *Then*, the colonies of Puritan New England had close sympathy with the dominant party in Great Britain, and saw, with delight which religious enthusiasm made most intense, the near triumph of men and of opinions for whose sake they had been mocked, and reviled, and scourged, and exiled; but the Parliament, even in its triumph, was too much engrossed at home, to do any thing for its distant, though beloved New England. The colonies found themselves in danger and unprotected, and at once, with an impulse so prompt as to prove it to be natural, declared themselves, not free and independent, which then they certainly did not wish to be, but UNITED. They proclaimed, not separation, but perfect and perpetual UNION.

In less than twenty years, the parent country had witnessed the surrender of its new-born and vigorous liberty into the hands, first of that great man, the greatest perhaps that England ever produced, the first Protector, and then of the most perfidious of her monarchs, the second Charles Stuart. United New England had, in the interval, been busy with her savage foes and foot by foot had driven the concentrated vigour of her union further and further westward. Thus occupied, she had taken no active part, or displayed no active sympathy, in the conflicts of Great Britain, though, in the vigorous language of one of her own historians, "she had been courted thereunto, by the person who is now laid asleep in the dark house of the grave, with his weapons under his head,"* and the Restoration found these colonies, though united, yet not flagrantly disloyal.

The process of time witnessed the gradual conquest or pacification of the Indians within the limits of New England, and, as the reluctant savage withdrew west of the Hudson, and stood, with his armed companions, at the foot of the Blue Ridge, determined to retreat no further, the circle of civilization becoming larger, there was a wider scope for united councils and united action. Something more than a *New England* confederacy was requisite for the common safety. The unbroken forest,

* Hubbard, 576.

and the savage enemy which tenanted it, reached from Georgia to New York, and as the charter limits of the New England provinces were asserted to extend far beyond the Hudson, they still had an interest in frontier warfare, though the war-whoop no longer disturbed their familiar privacy. And hence we see, from this time downward, to the attempted union in seventeen hundred and fifty-four, a constant succession of attempts at united action. The instinct was decided. As early as sixteen hundred and ninety-three, Pennsylvania, at the instance of Governor Fletcher, accredited an agent to treat with Commissioners from the neighbouring colonies, at New York, concerning quotas of men and moneys for frontier defence. And, from time to time, there were many other plans suggested, of the same kind, and with the same object.*

But it was not these semi-political combinations which were fabricating the true colonial union. Higher agencies were at work. The New England Confederacy was remarkable as the first fruits of a common danger, and the outward pressure on a few settlements and within a narrow compass, and as remarkable for the regularity of its structure and the completeness of its parts. The occasional conventions of provincial agents—of Governors, or commissioners, in later days, had no such interest. The masses were blending and har-

* See Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 1693, vol. i. p. 352.

monizing, though the forms of concerted action were less perfect.

In the early times of colonial warfare, it had been a strife, and a bloody strife, between the settler and the savage; but it was not long before the Indian found a new and formidable ally in the trained soldiery of France, who, lending to the savage the accomplishments of a bloody trade, seemed to receive in return an ample portion of that ferocious, indiscriminate appetite for carnage which characterizes the savage warrior. The French and Indians thus allied, were as formidable foes as ever hung upon the precincts of a peaceful or a warlike land.

It is much to be regretted that history has never yet adequately illustrated the great design of conquest and conversion, which was matured in the councils of Louis XIV, and which had for its field our western wilderness. That it was a scheme of vast scope and of sanguine promise cannot now be questioned. From the Lakes to the Ohio, the Jesuit missionary pursued his fearless and untiring course. No danger appalled him; no difficulty arrested his progress: and close on his trail, the French soldier followed—the power of this world widening, for its own purposes, the path which the preacher of the world to come had made before, and in the lapse of but few years, a line of French military posts was established on the western frontier from the Lakes to the Balize. Nor is there in history,

a record more full of romantic interest, and at the same time less accurately or minutely illustrated, than that of the French missions in the Valley of the Mississippi anterior to the Peace of seventeen hundred and sixty-three. Within a few years after Philadelphia was settled, and while, occasionally, an Indian eye peered across the Hudson at the sturdy burghers of New Amsterdam, Vincennes and Kaskaskia were founded. The Jesuit had raised the cross, and preached the word of God to the tenants of the forest, and there floated over the infant settlement, the same white flag of Bourbon France, which our mother country was fighting on the Atlantic and in Europe. And now, the far westward traveller is struck in the deep recesses of Indiana and Illinois with the names of Barrois, and Richardville, and Theriac, and Bolon, and Laplante, indicating as distinctly their origin and boasting as justly of their unadulterated continental descent, as do the Stuyvesants, and Van Rensselaers, the Dessausures, and Petrigrus of our eastern soil.*

The scheme of New France, thus commenced, and destined so soon to be abandoned, is one of the most magnificent divulged by history, and I can fully sympathize with a recent French traveller, one of the most accomplished that has ever visited us, when standing

* The historical student will find a most interesting sketch of the French settlements in the West, in an Address, delivered February 22, 1839, before the Historical and Antiquarian Societies of Vincennes, by the Hon. John Law.

near the site of Fort Duquesne, now lost amidst the chimneys of our Pennsylvania Birmingham, he mourned over the disappointment of this great enterprise. "Seventy-six years ago, this day," says Mr. Chevalier, "a handful of Frenchmen sorrowfully evacuated the Fort which stood on the point of land where the Allegheny and the Monongahela mingle their waters to form the Ohio, and the Empire of New France, like so many other magnificent schemes conceived in our country, ceased to exist. Fort Duquesne has now become Pittsburgh, and in vain did I piously search for some relics of the old French fort. There is no longer a stone, or a brick on the Ohio, to attest that France ever had a foothold there."

It is not my purpose to trace the progress of French and Indian warfare. From sixteen hundred and eighty to seventeen hundred and sixty-three, when the French flag was struck for ever in America, the British colonies never had a year, and scarcely a month of tranquil, real peace. If there was nominal pacification between the European sovereigns, no treaty bound the savage, and war may be said to have continued all the time. The pressure from without never intermitted. To-day, it was on Carolina—to-morrow, on Pennsylvania—the next day on New York and New England, and sometimes on all at once; and the effect necessarily and naturally was the invigoration of a sense of

common interest—a community of direct personal concern, which was in fact an union.*

Having shown the state of the country at the beginning of the century, and even still earlier, when George Fox wandered through its forest-covered territories, any one will be satisfied of the progress of united sentiment, who will open a colonial newspaper or book of travels, at or immediately before the peace of Paris.

In seventeen hundred and fifty-nine, an Episcopal clergyman, of the name of Burnaby, landed at Yorktown, in Virginia, and traveled as far northward and eastward as Portsmouth in New Hampshire. His published Journal is familiarly known to every historical student, and although his recorded opinions as the result of his observations, are that no social sympathy, even at that late day, existed among the colonies, and that a political union was wholly impracticable, yet the narrative of his own experience as a traveller, contradicts, conclusively, these very opinions. From Virginia to New England, from Cape Charles to Cape Cod, he traveled through *one* people, and never seems to have discovered any other difference of manner, habit, or opinion, than such as in a modified form, exist now. The Virginian planter he then describes “as indolent, easy, and good natured, extremely fond of society, and much given to convivial pleasures. He has little regard

* See Colonel Quarry's Memorial. 1703. Mass. Coll. Vol. 7, p. 222.

for economy, and is very apt to outrun his income." "The Virginians," he adds, "are very haughty, and jealous of their liberties, and cannot bear the thought of being controlled by any superior power on the face of the earth."* He crosses the Potomac and the Chesapeake and finds the Marylanders of the Eastern shore "very like their neighbours of Virginia, though not quite so presuming or so indolent, just as convivial, and not much less thriftless." He reaches Pennsylvania, and is lost in ecstasy. "Its trade," says he, "is surprisingly extensive. Their manufactures are very considerable. The Germantown woollen stockings are in high estimation—so much so, that the year before last, as I have been credibly informed, there were manufactured sixty thousand dozen pairs." (?) He enters our fair Quaker city and thus characterizes its population, how justly it is not for me to say. "The

* As early as seventeen hundred and three, a Metropolitan agent thus characterized the sons of the Old Dominion. "The Virginia gentlemen consider this Province of greater importance to her Majesty than all the rest of the Provinces on the maine, and therefore they falsely conclude they ought to have greater Privileges than the rest of her Majesty's subjects.—The Assembly, they conclude themselves entitled to all the Rights and Privileges of an English Parliament, and begin to search into the Records of that Honorable House for Precedents to govern themselves by. The Council have vanity enough to think that they almost stand upon equal terms with the Right Honourable, the House of Lords. These false and pernicious notions, if not timely prevented, will have a very ill consequence.—As I have already hinted to your Lordships, Commonwealth notions improve dayly, and if they be not checked in time, the rights and privileges of English subjects will be thought too narrow.

Colonel Quarry's Memorial.

Philadelphians are a frugal and industrious people, not remarkably courteous and hospitable to strangers, unless particularly recommended to them, but on the whole, I must confess, rather the reverse. The women, however, are exceedingly handsome and polite—they are naturally sprightly and fond of society, and unquestionably are far more accomplished and agreeable than the men.” He arrives at New York, which he describes “as subject to one great inconvenience, the want of fresh water, so that the inhabitants are obliged to have it brought from springs, at some distance out of town;” but then (he adds with evident zest,) “as some compensation, these waters afford various kinds of most delicious fish—black-fish, sea-bass, sheeps-head, lobsters, and several others, most delicious in their kind,” and finally, when he comes to describe the inhabitants, he says: “Being, however, of different nations, different religions, and different languages, it is almost impossible to give them any precise and determinate character.” And so, throughout his colonial pilgrimage, he discriminates just as the casual traveller would do now, and deduces, just as a superficial traveller might do now, from these exaggerated traits of diversity of manners, the absence of all community of sentiment amongst them. Yet he travels on, quietly and peaceably, through the English settlements, speaking the same language, using the same money, reading the same newspapers, meeting branches of the same

families, as in one united people, and it is only when he attempts to travel westward beyond that people's limits, that he is admonished he will find other than friends to each other and to himself. He ventures as far west as Winchester in Virginia, and then adds, in reference to those places of fashionable resort, whither so many, no doubt, of those who now hear me, periodically repair: "During my stay at Winchester, I was almost tempted to make a tour for a fortnight into Augusta County, for the sake of seeing some springs and other natural curiosities, which the officers assured me were well worth visiting; but, as the Cherokees had been scalping in those parts only a few days before, I thought it most prudent to decline it."

And yet his volume closes with grave speculations on the futurity then dawning on America, which satisfy him that its communities must always be disunited, helpless, and dependent, formed for happiness, perhaps, "*but certainly not formed for empire or for union*"—and as a reason for this conclusion, adduces the rivalry between New York and Pennsylvania, the two most powerful and aspiring colonies, whom he describes "as having an inexhaustible source of animosity in their jealousy for the trade of *New Jersey*!!" Thus contradictory were the opinions and the experience of an intelligent traveller in seventeen hundred and fifty-nine, and thus dimly did he see the future.

Five years prior to this date, a great incident in the affairs of Colonial America had occurred, which has confidently been relied on by those who question the antiquity of our social union—the meeting of the Commissioners, at Albany, in seventeen hundred and fifty-four, and the failure of their plan of confederation.

The history of this experiment, I am bound to presume, is familiar to you all. It was the convention of twenty-three commissioners, chosen by the Assemblies and commissioned by the crown, with a view, in the first instance, to devise a concert of action against the French and Indians. All that the Lords of Trade contemplated when they recommended this meeting was a compact, by which, after a war was begun, no colony should make a separate treaty with the Indians.* But the significant fact is, that no sooner was the Convention organized, than the proposition for a general and permanent union was introduced and unanimously approved, and within the short space of three weeks, the details of a well organized plan of a National Constitution were as unanimously adopted.

This act of the Representatives of the People thus convoked, speaks volumes. It told the secret, long disguised, that the social union had so matured that political union became a natural suggestion. Nor is it conceivable, that men as sagacious as Franklin and

* Massachusetts Hist. Trans. 3d Series, p. 22.

Hutchinson, would have warmly espoused a measure so decisive, without the strong conviction, not merely that the necessities of the people required, but that their minds were prepared for it. And it is as little accordant with the ordinary principles of human action, that they and their colleagues, all men of ability and consideration, should have committed so gross a blunder, or escaped its consequences, as to frame and recommend a plan of National Union, with the sovereign prerogatives of taxation, coinage, enlistment, and treaties vested in it, subject alone to the paramount control of the Crown, to a people so divided by local jealousies as it has been described.

The plan failed, it is true. Though unanimously recommended by the Convention, it was rejected by every Colony to which it was meant to apply, and whose representatives had voted for it. The colonial assemblies (for popular representation was the privilege of all) saw new danger, and perhaps new tyranny, in the delegated royal authority—the “*imperium in imperio*” of the Colonial Executive—and the ministry at home could not regard with complacency the creation of an united though dependent sovereignty, in a country where they saw their advantage in division, and where they only had recommended temporary concert, not enduring union.*

* See Report of Connecticut Committee (1st Series Mass. H. C. vol. 7, p. 209) recommending rejection of the plan, mainly on the ground of its interference with Charter privileges of *self* taxation.

But the plan mainly failed from a cause of greater efficacy which was at work unseen. Some sovereign, paramount authority was required to enforce political union and give it sanction, and no such supreme authority then existed or was then exercised; for a power higher than any known to the British Colonial or Metropolitan Constitution was requisite, and that power, sovereign necessity and the popular will of the nation, soon afterwards supplied. Had the colonies represented in the Albany Convention been left as New England was in sixteen hundred and forty-three, self-dependent—had the news reached its conclave that the British monarchy was convulsed by revolution and could not extend even a paralytic hand to support or restrain its distant subjects, may it not be reasonably inferred, at least by us who know what occurred within a few years afterwards, when the hand of the Monarchy, covered with a steel gauntlet, became the hand of the oppressor, that just such an union as was framed, or one more efficient and less dependent, would have been formed, and that there was no adequate obstacle to it in the social condition of the colonies.*

The peace of seventeen hundred and sixty-three, was the great era of the awakening of America. That peace gave opportunity for consciousness to tell its tale—op-

* See letter from Dr. Wm. Clarke, of Boston, to Dr. Franklin, dated May 6, 1754, (Mass. Hist. Coll. 1st Series, vol. 4, p. 74.) "However necessary an union may be for the mutual safety and preservation of these colonies, it is certain it will never take place, unless we are forced to it by the supreme authority of the nation."

portunity for self-examination, and self-comparison with those around and above, and if the first feeling was presumptuous or grateful joy, which, as it swelled in the bosom of each colonial community, certainly claimed no kindred with any thought of union, the next was a sense of deep injustice done by the common parent to all her American offspring—and in less than two years from that peace, a peace which took off the outward pressure, and removed the outward danger—in less than ten years from the dissolution of the Albany Convention and the rejection of its plan, a solemn Congress of the Colonies, convoked by Committees of Correspondence regularly organized from Carolina to New Hampshire, was sitting in this city, in stern and solemn deliberation on the common grievances of all the Colonies.

Of that Congress, the Stamp Act Congress of seventeen hundred and sixty-five, it is becoming every American to speak with reverence, as the forerunner of the other graver and greater body, which, called into being a few years later by renewed and protracted grievance, was destined never to adjourn. The Congress of seventeen hundred and sixty-five, was but the shadow of the coming substance, which sprang into being on the passage of the Port Bill, in seventeen hundred and seventy-four, and has its principal interest as an incident to the history of the political union of America.

It met in New York, and it is the duty of some one of the many accomplished writers that New York pos-

sesses, to present in detail its history to the world. The project had its origin in Massachusetts, but the suggestion met with a ready response throughout Colonial America. The Massachusetts letter was dated in June, and by the early part of October, the representatives of the most distant colonies had arrived in New York. But for the difficulties interposed by the Royal Governors, every colony would have been represented; even as it was, all seemed to feel alike, though some were thus denied any active participation. As I have said, I only refer to it as an incident in the history of progressive union. Its acts were a Petition and Remonstrance to the King and Parliament. Temperate and guarded as the remonstrance was, it was the earnest prayer of the *whole* people of America—a people united now in right, in grievance, and in complaint. No plans for future action were suggested or urged, and if any were thought of, they were withheld or suppressed for the sake of harmony and union.

There was an out-door observer, who watched the deliberations of the first Congress with deep solicitude, and who was destined to be the faithful witness and to keep the high record of a still graver and more solemn council. Charles Thomson, the Old Secretary, as he is called, then a young man, and a merchant of Philadelphia, came to New York to be the spectator of the doings of the Stamp Act Congress; and I have in my possession, deposited there for better uses than other

and jealous avocations permit me to apply it to, a manuscript Journal, written out at length by Mr. Thomson, of all its acts. For what object this record was made, whether for the writer's own use, or for ulterior purposes, it is not easy to say. It is a curious monument, as well of his industry as of the deep interest he then took in the approaching struggle.

And when, twenty-four years afterwards, this same witness came hither again, the only and the fit companion who accompanied Washington from Mount Vernon to New York, and stood by his side at his inauguration, and heard the solemn voice raised to swear fidelity to the Constitution of the INDEPENDENT UNITED STATES, what must not have been the thick-coming recollections which crowded on his mind! For fifteen years, long years of doubt and anxiety, had he kept the record of the august body, which necessity and intense sympathy had created for the guidance of revolutionary America, and which, without authority known to the laws or provincial constitutions, had almost miraculously, in concord and in discord, done all that regular government could do. He had seen, as an anxious spectator, what was done here to petition and remonstrate in seventeen hundred and sixty-five. He remembered the dark interval which followed, when bolt after bolt was forged in the parliamentary work-shop, and hurled at devoted America. He had not forgotten, when, at the end of that period, he had been suddenly called to be-

come the Secretary of the Congress of the Revolution, and found, in a small room in Carpenter's Hall, in Philadelphia, forty-one individuals, convened almost on their own motion, and preparing by their decrees to snatch from the British Crown, the brightest and dearest of its bright and most cherished jewels. The dawn of this Union was lowering and cloudy; and perhaps there never was a scene of more solemn anxiety than was presented at the moment when Charles Thomson entered that humble council chamber. It was a scene even better worthy of the painter's art, than that other more tranquil one which a national painter has embalmed. It was a scene on which, in the decline of life, the ancient Secretary was always proud to dwell.

On the fifth of September, seventeen hundred and seventy-four, the day the Congress met, Charles Thomson was a happy bridegroom. Musing, no doubt, on other things than the affairs of the public, he was met in the street by a hurried messenger, who came to tell him that the Congress, then about to organize, required his services as their Secretary. Nor were the excuses which he so reasonably urged admitted; but with the assurance that its session could not be prolonged more than a few days or weeks, he was made to yield a reluctant consent. As he entered the room, a plain, unadorned apartment, used by the Society of Master Carpenters for their periodical meetings, the Congress had just been called

to order, and prayers were about to be said. It was a prayer of deep solicitude—a prayer, which, through the lips of the preacher, came from the hearts of his auditors, and asked a blessing and illumination on councils which were intricate and perplexed. But as the preacher, the loyal preacher,* prayed for the restoration of peace and friendly intercourse with the parent country, there were some faces in that assembly through which might be traced the instincts which prompted the belief that peace had fled for ever—that the silver cord was loosened, and the bowl broken at the very fountain—and that the next prayer which would there be heard, would be a still more fervent one, for the patriot, fighting for his home, and for the rights of home.—There was the subdued and anxious visage of Joseph Gallo-way, and the rather bolder, but still perplexed countenance of John Dickinson, the two great leaders of the peaceful politics of Pennsylvania; but neither of them the man for revolutionary times.—But there stood close by, a phalanx of other men, erect and firm, with iron frames and souls of fire; undaunted, and ready for any crisis that might arise. There was the meagre, attenuated form of HENRY, care-worn by the restless thoughts which were coursing through his soul—there were JOHN and SAMUEL ADAMS, stern and scornful; the latter, the image of what we may conceive an ancient Cameronian to have been, or one of those “grave,

* The Rev. Jacob Duché.

sad men," who, in the days of the Commonwealth, pronounced the stern decree on Charles Stuart—"Tyrant of England." There stood MIDDLETON, and the RUTLEDGES, and RICHARD HENRY LEE, the true representatives of Southern chivalry—and there, "the noblest Roman of them all," your own JOHN JAY, than whom no purer spirit shed its influence on the contest then beginning; and near them stood one other, whom I need not name, an unpretending, young man, of noble stature and of modest mien, scarcely known except to his colleagues, who, as the prayer ascended, bowed his head in reverence, as if reluctant to look upon the future which was to canonize his glorious name. And from this moment downwards, Charles Thomson kept the record of the doings of that Congress—"he wrote what the thunders uttered"—he witnessed and shared its councils of dismay, anxiety, and triumph. When the approach of the enemy, in seventeen hundred and seventy-six, compelled them to retire to Baltimore, he was with them. When, at the darkest hour of the war, they retired to York, few in numbers, and broken in spirit, he was with them still—more than their mere scribe; their counsellor and friend: the man of undaunted courage, as he was the man of unquestioned truth. As I have said, he lived to see the consummation of the work, the hour of triumph, the hour of perfected union. Whenever the history of the Union shall be written, the few (and unhappily there are but few)

records of this old man's life, will be worthy of careful study. Among them is a letter from Mr. Jay, from which, as it has never been published, I am tempted here to quote an extract. It is dated at Passy, in July, seventeen hundred and eighty-three, and seems to have had no other object than to urge the following suggestion.

“When I consider that no person in the world, is so perfectly acquainted with the rise, conduct, and conclusion of the American Revolution as yourself, I cannot but wish that you would devote one hour in the four-and-twenty, to giving posterity a true account of it. I think it might be comprised in a small compass; it need not be burdened with minute accounts of battles, sieges, retreats, evacuations, &c.: leave those matters to voluminous historians. The *political* story of the Revolution will be most liable to be misrepresented, and future relations of it will probably be replete both with intentional and accidental errors. Such a work would be highly advantageous to your reputation, as well as highly important to the cause of truth, with posterity. I do not mean it should be published during your life. That would be improper for many reasons; nor do I think it should be known that you are employed in such a work. This hint is, therefore, for yourself, and shall go no further.”

How much is it to be regretted that this wish was

disappointed, especially as a long life of leisure was then before him to whom it was addressed.

Mr. Thomson retired from public life in July, seventeen hundred and eighty-nine, then seeming to others, and believing himself an old man, having reached that age which the sceptical wisdom of this day fixes as the limit beyond which the judicial intellect at least cannot endure. Yet he who then thought the infirmities of approaching age required seclusion and repose, lived no less than thirty-five years in retirement, thirty of them in the full possession of his faculties and mental vigour. Nor was this a more remarkable instance of the unlooked for duration of human life, than that of another man of the revolution. There is extant, a letter from Dr. Franklin, which I have seen, dated at London, in September, seventeen hundred and sixty-six, in which he complains of the growing infirmities of years, and of his possible inability, on account of them, to return to America. Yet after that, what did not this old man live to see and do. He crossed the Atlantic no less than three times—he saw a civil war break out and terminate—he saw Independence declared and acknowledged—he framed the first Constitution of Pennsylvania, and was Governor under it—he negotiated the alliance with France—he signed the Definitive Treaty of Peace with Great Britain—he saw a National Sovereignty created, and was an active member of that au-

gust body which framed the Constitution of the Union. All this he did, after he condemned himself as too old and too feeble to work at all. The name of Dr. Franklin recalls me to the path from which I have unconsciously wandered, and brings me back but for a moment before I conclude, to the Congress of seventeen hundred and sixty-five, and its incidents. Among them, not the least important was Franklin's mission to England, and his being chosen by several colonies to represent them. For a series of years, he was, in fact, the minister to London of the United Colonies, and as the American Representative in Great Britain, became the object of deep and affectionate interest to all who felt he represented them. His appearance before the Privy Council, and his examination at the bar of the House of Commons, as an *American* witness, are leading incidents in our United History.

Between seventeen hundred and sixty-five and seventeen hundred and seventy-four, chain after chain was forged in the mother country to shackle the limbs of her colonies. Such, in that interval, was the growth of united sentiment in America, so perfect the neighbourly sympathy, that the immediate cause of the convocation of the Revolutionary Congress was no enactment affecting all, or any considerable portion of Colonial America, but a statute having for its object the punishment of a single disobedient town and the closing of a single harbour.

Ministerial vengeance aimed a blow at the merchants and traders of Boston, and the whole nation, through its representatives in Congress, stepped forward to the rescue.

The councils of the Old Congress, this great creation of the social union, its secret doings and deliberations, are but little known. The witnesses of that conclave have, one by one dropped into the grave, and no one survives to tell the tale of its anxious deliberations. For myself, were I to express one wish nearer to my heart than any other connected with historical investigations, it is that the illuminated record of those councils may yet be rescued from oblivion.* It would illustrate the spirit of the Revolution better than its battles or its tumults—it would show how little communion that spirit has with the radicalism of the hour, which profanely claims the Revolution as its authority—the spirit of patriotic deliberation—the firm contemplation of impending danger—the resolution to do public duty

* Mr. Madison's Report of the Debates in the old Congress, extends from the 4th of November, 1782, to the 21st June, 1783. Mr. Jefferson's brief memoranda extend from June 7th, to August 1st, 1776. "These," says Mr. Gilpin, in his Preface to the Madison Papers, "are the only known or probable materials of what passed in Congress in the form of Debates." Among the papers of Charles Thomson, now in my possession, is a folio volume of about seventy pages of manuscript Notes of Debates in Congress, made by Mr. Thomson, extending from July 23d, to 20th September, 1782. They appear to be very full and precise. It is the intention of Mr. Thomson's family to have these and other memorials of their distinguished ancestor published.

at whatever sacrifice—the heroism of high counsel—the intellectual romance which distinguishes our Revolution from all others the world has ever seen.

And, to judge the better of this romantic purity, contrast it, either in the council or the field, with that other of history's records which was so soon after written—the annals of revolutionary France. Compare the old Continental Congress with the Assembly, or the Notables, or the Convention, or the Council of Ancients. Take their great men, from Mirabeau, the greatest of them all, downward on the roll, to the poorest, strolling patriot of the smallest section, and contrast each and all of them with the true chivalry of our annals—our soldiers or our statesmen, and still the palm is gloriously ours.

I have often made this contrast, and have often tried to find, in the annals of Revolutionary France, any thing on which that high principle of our intellectual and moral nature, the poetic instinct, can dwell with pleasure. They were tragic enough; but it was the unvarying, unmitigated tragedy which nauseates the mind with horrors. There was no more poetry in it than there is in the gallows or the bow-string. It was like witchcraft's dread mixture, the fermentation of coarse animal ingredients, without a leaf, or a flower, or a fragrant herb being cast into the boiling cauldron, or ever bubbling to its surface. There was no object of sympathy, or there were ten

thousand too many. The Republic itself, even as it sprang from its birth-place, was no creation of beauty. There were the helmet and the sword, and the gorgon shield with all its hissing snakes—but there was not the majestic step or the stately beauty of the Goddess. And when the Republic fell, after it had so often changed its garb from one costume of frippery to another, and so often washed its bloody hands, there is nothing to compare it to, in all its mutilated and unpitied deformity, but that most disgusting of its horrible pictures, when Robespierre lay stretched on a table in the Committee of Public Safety, with his hands tied behind him, like a common felon—his jaw broken by his own cowardly pistol-shot, dressed in a sky-blue silk coat, with his powdered hair and his lace ruffles dabbled in his own blood. It was the very incarnation of French Republicanism in its last unpitied agonies.

Our Revolution was the effort of a dependent people to stand by itself—to think for itself—to govern itself. It was the effort of a poor people to sustain itself. It involved a long and unequal contest—the desolation of many a field of prosperous industry—the sacrifice of many a cherished life. But it involved no wanton desolation. It was a war of defence—a war for home and the rights of home. There was no persecution—there was no scaffold. There was, throughout, and never more than in our early *united* councils, the high dignity of that character which America inherited

from her British ancestry, embellished by the gentler grace which the refining spirit of the age hung around it. It was like the first great English Revolution in its dignity—unlike it—oh how unlike it, in its results!

Having thus, within limits which necessity and propriety impose, hinted at rather than illustrated a vindication of the antiquity of our social union, is there no lesson to be gathered from the retrospect—no moral which this very antiquity enforces? It is the social union and its antiquity, alone, that I have sought to vindicate—the union of distant hearts, rather than the union of hands—the yearning of hearts which space alone separates, but which are bent on the same dear object, warmed by the same cherished affections. From the social union the political union sprang, and with the social union will the political union perish. The social union is the Mother Earth on which the Temple stands. That Mother Earth I would keep sacred, free even from the spade and the plough which would break the sod where grow the grass and flowers that spring from the graves of our Revolutionary forefathers.

The political Union has safely stood. It has withstood violence—it has withstood metaphysics—it has withstood the subtle spirit of political criticism, a spirit which studies the Constitution as the sceptic studies the Bible, to doubt and to cavil, and for its own purposes to *construe it strictly*. It has defied all this, and

yet sometimes the fear will intrude itself—that all is not safe yet.

There are, on the face of the building (the northern side too, where the moss begins to grow) two adjacent masses, which can never be separated without toppling down the fabric itself. Your own hearts will tell you, with what feelings the events of the day prompt me, a Philadelphian, to speak to you as New Yorkers. If any foreign traveller, like the Rev. Mr. Burnaby in seventeen hundred and fifty-nine, were to come to our country now, to speculate, as he did, on the surface, the *very* surface of things, what might not be the impressions on his mind, that passing events would produce. He would see New York and Pennsylvania, not the cradled infants they then were, but full grown, with gigantic proportions, and animated by spirits as ardent and generous as ever were breathed into humanity; not contending for “the trade of New Jersey;” but striving fairly, generously, actively, for the commerce of a new world, which has sprung up in the wilderness. He might find them, if he looked merely at the surface, and took for his guides, those who now claim to be the guides of public opinion, standing in the attitude of desperate gladiators, and (what gladiators would not do,) hurling at each other every missile that revenge or malice can supply. New York, seeming to triumph over Pennsylvania in an hour of distress and difficulty;

exulting over a brother, not fallen, not even bowed down, but yielding, as the strong man yields to the blast that he has often breasted, yielding, as his brothers of the union have yielded before him, and now, in this, his darkest hour, collecting his mighty energies to stand as nobly and as proudly as before:—and Pennsylvania forced to think that New York, this beautiful New York, through whose streets no one can walk without admiration; from whose citizens no one can part without gratitude; that New York is its worst and bitterest enemy.

It was not so in times gone by. It was not so during the Revolution, or the times, almost as trying, which immediately preceded it, when the spirit of the social union was hovering over the councils of those who met to raise the Confederation. The nearest and dearest friend of John Jay of New York, was Charles Thomson of Philadelphia; of Robert Morris of Pennsylvania, him who raised, and almost individually sustained the finances of the Revolution, the best, most confidential, most worthy friend, was Alexander Hamilton of New York: and there is in existence in Philadelphia, a mass of most interesting correspondence between these two great men, which illustrates more strongly than any yet laid before the world, not only their consummate sagacity, and foresight of the dim and distant future, but the deep, fervent, and affectionate friendship which subsisted between them. And with

such canonized examples, shall we, the little men of a fleeting hour which may have no other record but of miserable squabbles about protested bills and specie payments, allow the chains of sacred affection, thus forged, to be thus rudely broken?

Nor is this local strife all. There are, it is to be feared, elements of fierce combustion swelling and heaving the ground beneath our feet. The pure, spirit-like flame of loyalty to the state, of true love to the institutions under which we live, begins to pale its ineffectual fire before the ghastly glare of fierce fanaticism, and the torch which wild enthusiasm waves aloft. Not only is the genius of revolution exercising its sway on the moss-covered governments of the old world, but a subtle and busy dæmon, the bastard progeny of one of the parents of all revolution is at work, to pick out the cement of affection which binds this Union together. We are beginning to learn that fidelity to the Common State is a secondary duty, and love to our distant fellow-citizen no duty at all. When the full fruition of these doctrines is attained—when the hour arrives in which the value of the Union is to be calculated—when the balance is to be struck between what will be called romantic notions of duty and allegiance, and substantial items of profit and loss on one side, and dogmas of transcendental morality on the other—when the holiest of early associations and the purest affections, the love of country, and the reverence of ancestry are to be

weighed in the scale against American utilitarianism, or American ultraism, it will be too late to talk of our common legacy. But the time has not come. The sympathies of republican America are yet active. The heart of the South is not yet ossified by the pestilent doctrine of the day—that what is profitable is right. The Northern heart beats true to its allegiance—true to a brother's love.

I have now concluded what I have to say to you, leaving myself open to the just criticism and as just rebuke, of having said too much, and yet so little. But I have said enough, if in the heart of any one of those who have so kindly listened, I have invigorated a sentiment of affection or of loyalty to the common state—or have suggested one new thought connected with that best of histories for us, our own. The foundation of the Union was common right—its best security is common inheritance. The soil on which we stand is filled with the bones of those who lived and died for us. The spirits of the mighty dead are above us and about us. Their affections are breathing around us. The object of their toil, the recompense of their suffering was this Republican Union. To perpetuate that Union, to awe to blushing silence all whispers of disunion, let them come whence they may, I would hang on its walls, and stand in its noble porticoes, the pictures of heroic deeds and the statues of the men that did them. I would build high monuments on their

graves, on which praises more just than the canon of the day can boast of, should be written, and then, when the agent of faction or mistaken zeal should venture to breathe a word as to the Union's value, or the Constitution's obligation, I would lead him thither, and as we knelt in veneration together, would trust to some interceding spirit to draw from his lips as fervent a prayer as mine, that the work of the Revolution may not be in vain.

APPENDIX.

A. *Ex-President Adams.*

The following letter has never before been published, and its existence is probably unknown to the eminent individual to whom it in part relates. It is a letter from John Dickinson to Mr. Jefferson, written in 1801, on the election of the latter to the presidency. By one of those curious transitions which often occur in politics, Mr. Dickinson, in the latter part of his life, became the vehement partizan of the extreme doctrines of Mr. Jefferson and his school, and it was in the confidence of personal and political friendship that the following letter was written. Mr. Dickinson was a leading member of the Society of Friends and resided in the State of Delaware. During the latter part of his life, Mr. Jefferson and he corresponded on terms of extreme affection. In March, 1801, Mr. Jefferson, in thanking his "very dear and ancient friend" for a letter, says, (vol. 3, p. 454,) "No pleasure can exceed that which I received from reading your letter of the 21st. It was like the joy we expect in the mansions of the blessed, when received with the embraces of our forefathers, we shall be welcomed as having done our part not unworthily of them." After Mr. Dickinson died, in 1807, Mr. Jefferson's ecstatic affection for him seems to have been buried in his grave; for in 1813, he wrote as follows, to another "very dear and ancient friend," (p. 202.) "In the old Congress, you and I were together, and the Jays, (!) and the *Dickinsons*, and other anti-independents were arrayed against us. They cherished the monarchy of England, and we the rights of our countrymen." A few years later, (p. 315,) he speaks of "the *doubling Dickinson* and others who hung so heavily upon us."

Wilmington, the 27th of the 6th month, 1801.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Thy letter of the 21st, was received the day before yesterday, and as I value thy esteem at a very high rate, it gave me great pleasure. If it be possible that I can render any service to thee by offering my sentiments on things relating to this state, as on the broader scale of the Union, I shall cheerfully express them, being fully persuaded that therein I shall, in the best manner I can, serve my country. When a person, attentively surveying the world, observes the variety of opinions on the same subjects, and the peculiarity of circumstances occasioning such variety, however he may condemn some of them as erroneous or injurious, yet, if they are held in sincerity, he will regard the holders of them with complacency and not with aversion. He sees his fellow-creatures wandering from salutary truths, to which he wishes to bring them back, for their own welfare as well as for the general benefit. These dispositions are accordant with the goodness of the Common Parent, which has invested all his rational creatures with equal rights, and with propensities favourable to mutual felicity. Actual republicanism is a system of human invention, for carrying these benevolent and sacred principles into effect, by the diffusion of happiness. Republicans, therefore, cannot, in any consistency with the principles of their system, proscribe any of their fellow-citizens merely for a difference of political opinion. On this important point, real republicans are not governed by reasoning only. They discover in themselves sensations superior to arguments. Their benignity is not completely gratified, unless their adversaries share in their satisfaction. The prudence of such a conduct is questioned by some; its efficacy by others. To both it may be replied, that parties consist of dissoluble materials; and that every country in Europe, and particularly England, furnishes instances of parties, agitated by the most furious rage against each other, of which no traces are now to be found, but in the pages of history. There is one peril peculiar to a successful party, of which many examples, ancient and modern, occur: that is, of its dividing. We have not been without a domestic sample of this kind. In every age, and in every land, an eager selfishness has been the source of this evil. At present, there is little to be apprehended by republicans on this head, though it may not be improper to consider such an event as a possibility; for then the attention will be duly engaged in guarding against it. The greatest danger to rulers is while the passions are in conflict; that danger may be avoided by two modes of proceeding. First, by engaging in measures that will gradually withdraw the mind from the objects of contest; and more especially, if the measures are such as both parties may approve. An agreement in these latter affairs will be a kind of opiate against former feuds. Secondly, by turning the countenance of Government, with respect and kindness, upon those who differ from the rulers in opinion. Here immediately "the serious difficulties" open to view. It is to be lamented, that many

APPENDIX.

who join with us are not sufficiently acquainted with the wisdom or temper of their profession. Their ardour is honest; too often tinged with a vindictive spirit, and sometimes dashed with more than a sufficiency of selfishness. These are not the best, though frequently the most importunate of counsellors.

Perfectly assured, as I am, that the Chief Magistrate of my country aims at the universal good of his fellow-citizens, and invited as I am by his obliging condescension, I let my thoughts flow from my pen without reserve. It seems to me impossible for the President to have adopted a more wise method for obtaining useful information, than that of being on terms of confidential intercourse with several persons in each state, on whom he can rely. Yet that method will not solve every difficulty. The character of the administration is to be fixed in the opinion of the world. It is to be acknowledged to be mild, firm, generous, dignified. Disdaining to court its enemies, it will not be unduly influenced by its friends. The Administrator will act as the father of his country.

Taking this elevated station, I wish him to make two or three capital promotions of his opponents, with proper pauses between the appointments, so that each may make its full impression. I do not mean from among those in Congress, who, abusing the trust reposed in them, and sinning against better knowledge, have for unworthy purposes, by a vile sophistry, striven to confound all distinction between right and wrong, audaciously violated the constitution, and avowed doctrines utterly incompatible with the maxims of Liberty. Let us leave these Tarantines and the angry deities they worship, in company together. Among these promotions, I should like to see the son of *our enemy*, John Adams, appointed minister to the Court of Petersburg. The more unexpected such an act, the greater will be its effect. It implies a sincere confidence in the promoter, and that his mind moves in a region above the stormy or the obscuring passions. Another consideration will come home to such a heart as thine. This honourable regard to a falling family, will be soothing to them. It may render them less unhappy; and as it is a blessed thing to have the power of doing good to others, even a chance of its application is valuable. As to political considerations, internal or external, they appear to me decisive. As to the first, it may be sufficient to add to what has been said, that the warm persons who may be displeased, will become reconciled. As to the second, I have never heard any satisfactory reason assigned, why the greatest Northern Power has been slighted by our prompt advances to those that are inferior. The accession of a new Prince, the points of public law now in controversy, and a number of accompanying circumstances, seem to call upon us to form a Treaty that shall recognize principles favourable to all mankind, and convince Russia that we wish to come to her market for some of her manufactures. It strikes me that a perfectly friendly intercourse with that country, and with France, is of more importance to us than with any other two portions in Europe.

As to the other promotions that have been mentioned, by being remarkable, or reasonable, they will operate desirably in tranquillizing minds that are too much heated. These dispositions being made, the distribution of other offices may go on without giving much disgust, especially as great changes must be made before one party can be brought up to an equality with the other. Respecting this state, some of the best informed citizens are of opinion that no removals should take place, unless for malversation in office, before the next session of Congress. Called upon, as I am, by thy friendship and love of country, I shall plainly answer the case proposed. If nothing shall be decided by the instituted inquiry, yet, if "electioneering activity" be admitted as a cause of removal, I question whether any man in these states has been more zealous in that way, than the officer mentioned. Two persons here wish to succeed him. John Bennet, an officer of merit in our revolutionary war, and Thomas Mendenhall, who, as a private individual, suffered a good deal in that war. I have never heard the character of either of them impeached; they are both worthy republicans. I think the last is the best qualified for the office. When any other alterations are meditated in this state, I shall be ready to give my sentiments, with a cheerfulness and impartiality becoming a man who fervently desires thy administration may be beneficial to thy country, and honourable to thyself, and who is, with the strictest truth, thy affectionate friend,

JOHN DICKINSON.

It is unnecessary to add, that Mr. Dickinson's advice, with reference to Mr. John Quincy Adams, was not followed. Mr. Adams was appointed to the Russian mission in 1809, by Mr. Madison.



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